



N° 64

June 2012



Union Internationale de Spéléologie (UIS)  
Commission on Volcanic Caves

*e*-NEWSLETTER



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U.I.S. COMMISSION ON VOLCANIC CAVES

No. 64 - June 2012

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<http://www.uis-speleo.org/>



<http://www.vulcanospeleology.org>

The Commission on Volcanic Caves Newsletter has been published quarterly since December 22, 1993. The Newsletter is available free of charge to all members of the commission, and to others who are interested in lava caves.

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**U.I.S. COMMISSION  
ON VOLCANIC CAVES**

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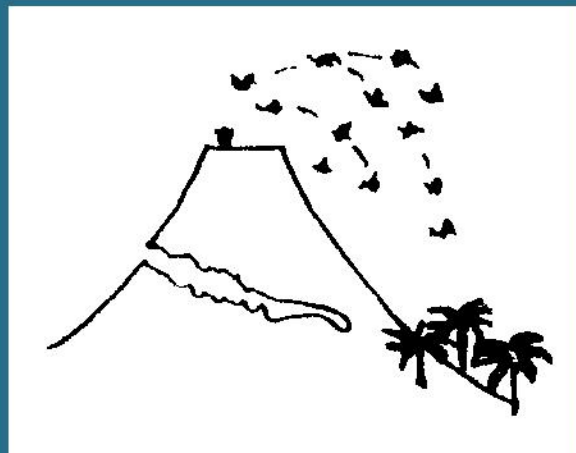
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**MISSION STATEMENT**

The U.I.S. Commission on Volcanic Caves encourages exploration and scientific investigation of volcanic caves, and hosts the International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology about every two years.



**COVER PHOTO**

An active eruption during the 1969–1971 Mauna Ulu eruption of Kilauea Volcano, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Hawai'i. Photo by J.B. Judd, October 21, 1970. Photo is courtesy of the U.S Geological Survey (U.S.G.S).

THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



JAN PAUL VAN DER PAS

Report Commission on Volcanic Caves  
2009 – 2013

Till this moment the commission held every second year a symposium. Iceland 2002, Azores 2004, Mexico 2006, Korea 2008, Australia 2010, and recently Jordan 15–22 March 2012. The Jordan symposium was successful and very interesting, and organized by Prof Ahmad Al-Malabeh. Not only caves, but also archaeological sites were visited. Amount of participants was 15 during the start, but with an opening ceremony with at least 150 people!

Clearly the recession has some influence. Already in 2012 in Australia some 10

people who regular visited the symposia were not attending. The original amount of participants of the Jordan symposium was so limited that the organizer considered to cancel or postpone the symposium, which would have been catastrophic for those who had booked they flights already. Thanks to Prof. Kempe, who has good contacts with the organizer this did not happen.

On 18 March we held the Commission meeting with 10 participants. Sad point was the fact two important members were not with us anymore: Prof. Greeley and Dr. Chris Wood.

Due to the small amount of participants no decision could be taken about the next Symposium.

Earlier proposals were New Mexico – but due to WNS most caves are closed. For Galapagos only two members showed interest. Harry Marinakis suggested Hawaii, but who is organizing there? Certainly with a smaller amount of participants in the future it must be made clear to organizers if there might be a minimum to succeed.

Chairman Jan–Paul van der Pas  
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# e-NEWSLETTER U.I.S. COMMISSION ON VOLCANIC CAVES

## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHAIRMAN

Greetings to the Commission:

The 15<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology was held in Zarka, Jordan, from March 15 through March 22, 2012.

We explored other parts of Jordan such as Petra and the Wadi Rum before and after the symposium.

We had a wonderful time in Jordan, thanks to our kind and generous hosts.  
THANK YOU!

This newsletter is dedicated to a report on the symposium. Other topics and submissions will be included in the next newsletter

Cheers,

Harry Marinakis  
Vice-chairman

[harrymarin@gmail.com](mailto:harrymarin@gmail.com)



Happy delegates at the symposium in Jordan. (Photo by John Brush.)



**Chris Wood**

April 4, 1947 - January 19, 2012

by Ed Waters

Chris will undoubtedly be remembered primarily for his almost unparalleled contribution to the understanding of the formation of lava tube caves. This contribution ranged from the exploration and surveying of some of the world's most extensive lava tube systems, through to over 50 published works on the subject and contribution of papers to seven International Symposia on Vulcanospeleology. As impressive as this contribution is, it doesn't in the slightest bit convey his infectious enthusiasm that has inspired many others, including myself, to look at lava tubes as something more than a "second best alternative to a "real" limestone cave.

Chris started caving through the Scouts in the early 1960s, being mentored by none other than Fred Davies. This led him to join the Shepton Mallet Caving Club in 1966, of which he was a member until 1992 and he retained close



links with the club until his death in January this year. It was with the Shepton that he was first introduced to Lava Tubes, with the club's 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary expedition to Iceland. One result of this trip was a paper published in the CGR transactions discussing the nature and formation of Lava Tube Caves – the first of at least 50 such publications. It should also be noted that Chris' PhD was entitled "Lava Tubes: Their Morphogenesis and Role in Flow Formation".

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## U.I.S. COMMISSION ON VOLCANIC CAVES



From the wastes of Iceland Chris was involved in a series of expeditions to lava tube caves, the highlights probably being the exploration and survey of Cueva del Viento in Tenerife in 1973 which at 7920m was the longest lava tube cave known at the time, and the United Kingdom Speleological Expedition to Hawai'i in 1979 which surveyed over 22km of cave, including 11.5km of Kazumura Cave (now the world's longest lava tube at over 65km long).

Back at home, Chris used his geography skills to become the information officer for the Yorkshire Dales National Park in 1982. I know that Chris remembered his time in the Dales with great fondness, including the caving in

Limestone occasionally. In 1996 he left the Dales and moved to a lecturing post at the School of Applied Sciences in Bournemouth University. It was three years later that I first met Chris on the Shepton Mallet Caving Club's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Holiday to Slovenia. It was during this trip that he managed to "con" me on to the Laki Underground Expedition to Iceland in 2000. This expedition shows the best of Chris' character, managing a mixed group of students (from both Bournemouth and Dundee Universities), some hairy cavers and geophysicists to carry out real exploration and scientific research in one of the remotest areas of Europe. To me however the real memory is my shock at discovering that Lava Tubes could be so interesting. This was completely down to Chris' infectious enthusiasm, and deep knowledge, for these phenomena. I had originally gone on the trip to see Iceland, using the lava tubes as an excuse to go, but came back bitten by the lava tube bug. This was entirely Chris' fault, and the effect has proven to be a lasting one - travelling to Iceland, Mexico, the Canary Islands, Sicily and Korea.

The Laki Underground 2000 expedition was such a success that Chris organised a follow up trip in 2001. In total these two expeditions explored and surveyed



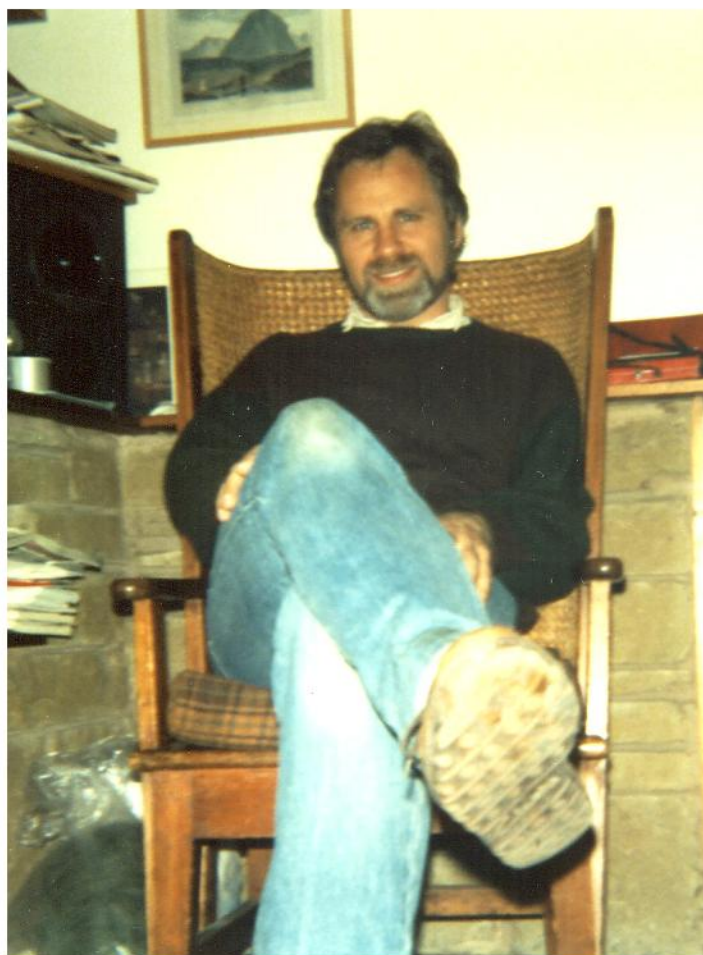
# U.I.S. COMMISSION ON VOLCANIC CAVES

in excess of 11km of new passage, and carried out ground breaking research into the use of geophysical techniques to detect entranceless lava tubes from the surface. This work was recognised by Chris being awarded the Arthur Butcher Award for excellence in cave surveying at Hidden Earth in 2002.

After the second Laki expedition, Chris and I kept in close touch. At this time Chris was becoming heavily involved with assisting governments proposing sites for UNESCO world heritage status. A sideline to his academic career that had him jetting all over the world - indeed it was often difficult to keep up with Chris' busy schedule of exotic destinations.

In 2006 I was lucky enough to visit lava tubes in Lanzarote and attend the XII Symposium on Vulcanospeleology with Chris. It was at this symposium that I came to realise in how much esteem Chris was held by his peers from all over the world. During 2007 Chris went on a true adventure to Mount Suswa in Kenya, where he helped the local Masai make plans for developing the extensive caves into a tourist attraction. I was also most fortunate in being able to persuade him to join an expedition to Iceland later in the year.

One of the world heritage applications that Chris had championed was that of Jeju Island (Republic of Korea). His work being so valuable to the successful outcome that he was made an honorary citizen of the island in 2007. Chris had regaled me with stories of giant lava tubes decorated with calcite formations, so when it was announced that the XII International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology was to be held there, it took little persuasion to join Chris there. This was the last occasion that I went underground with Chris.







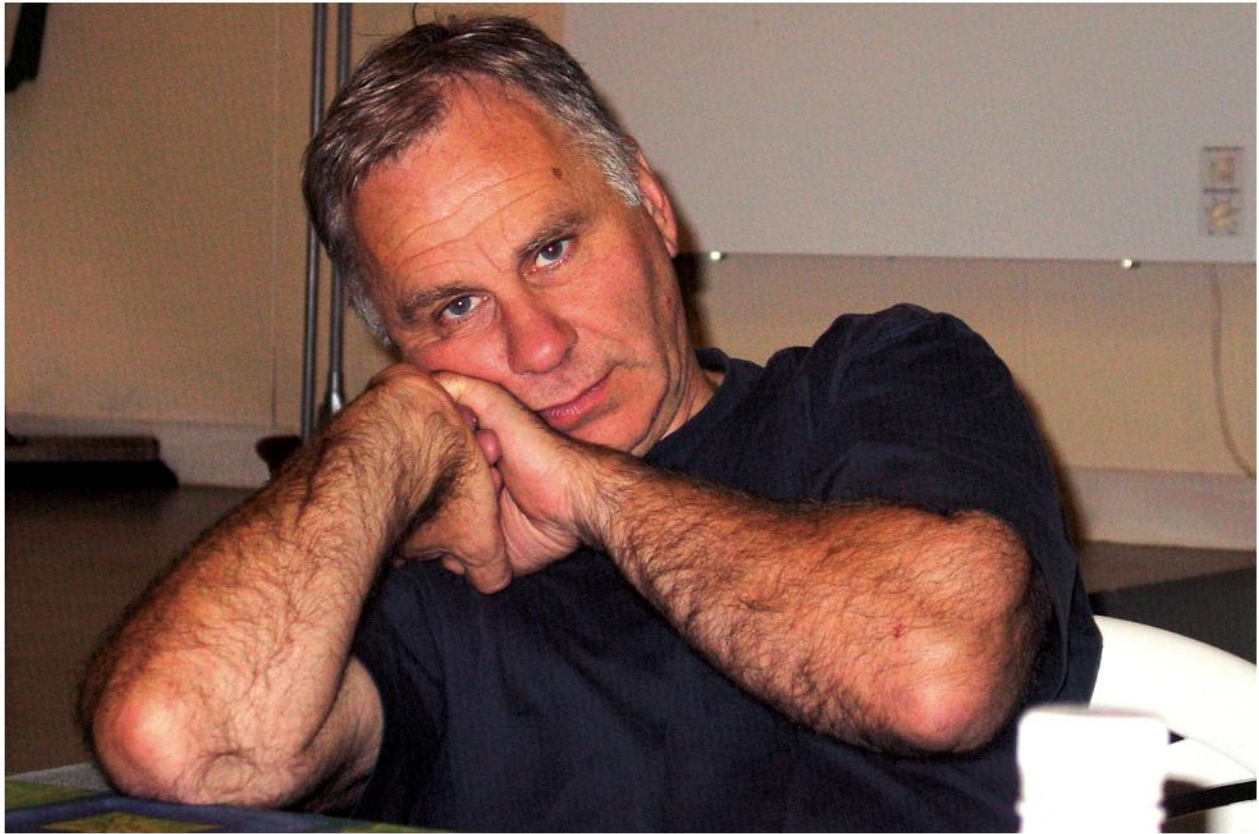
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Over the following years we kept in contact, meeting up for a meal and a chat regularly and it was always a pleasure to catch up with Chris' latest adventures, including becoming a Professor at a university in China. We always talked of plans to return to Iceland, or the Canaries or to one of the other areas Chris thought were ripe for the exploration of lava tubes. I never got the chance to cave with Chris in the UK, and his sudden death has left many plans half formulated. Perhaps the greatest tragedy is that Chris was working on a definitive book about lava tube caves

for the UIS Commission on Volcanic Caves, of which Chris was a long standing member.

Personally I will miss a truly unique friend, and I know that next time I find myself in a lava tube all those questions I wish I had asked will come flooding back to me.

Chris' ashes were laid to rest in a woodland burial near to his home in Dorset. Amongst the many mourners there were over 20 cavers young and old to wish him fairwell. Our deepest sympathies go out to Chris' family at this Mills for providing details from before 1999.



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## U.I.S. COMMISSION ON VOLCANIC CAVES

### 15th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



**The Symposium**  
March 15 – 18, 2012  
Hashemite University  
Jarka, Jordan



**The Post-Symposium Field Trip**  
March 19 – 22, 2012  
Badia Research & Development Center  
As-Safawi, Jordan



The primary organizer of the symposium was Professor Ahmad Al-Malabeh, PhD (center), director of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Hashemite University. He is flanked to his right by the Commission chairman Jan Paul van der Pas and to his left by Professor Stephan Kempe. (Photo by Nader Atieh Alabed.)



### Map of Jordan and the Surrounding Countries

The symposium was held in Zarka. The post-symposium field trip was held in As-Safawi in the Harrat Al-Shaam volcanic field. Other places of interest (such as Umm Qies, Jawa, Qasr Burqu, Petra and the Wadi Rum) were also on the itinerary.

## The Symposium Program Agenda



Photo by Nader Atieh Alabed.

**March 15, 2012:** Opening ceremony, introductions, dedications, awards, and presentations. A tour of ancient Roman ruins in Amman during the evening.

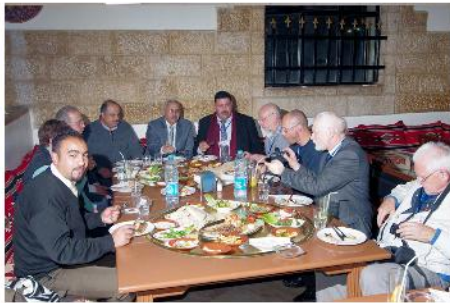
**March 16, 2012:** Field trip to northern Jordan. Caving in the 2,000 year-old tunnels of the Roman Yarmouk-Decapolis aqueduct (longest known tunnel from ancient times). A tour of the ancient Roman city of Umm Qies, overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

**March 17, 2012:** Presentations. A tour of the ancient ruins of Al-Hallabat in the evening. The official meeting of the Commission at night.

**March 18, 2012:** Presentations, closing ceremony.



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Page 10 Photo Captions (left to right, top to bottom):

Hashemite University. By Harry Marinakis.

Al-Hallabat. By Marjorie Coggan.

Opening ceremony. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Dining in a restaurant after the field trip to northern Jordan. By John Brush.

Roman ruins in Amman. By Marjorie Coggan.

The entrance to Al-Turah spring and the start of the Roman Yarmouk-Decapolis aqueduct. By Greg Middleton.

The ruins of Umm Qies. By Stephan Kempe.

Lunch during the symposium. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Amphitheater at Umm Qies. By John Brush.

Dinner at a local restaurant in Amman. By John Brush.

Guests at the symposium. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Panorama of the valley of Al-Turah spring. photo by Greg Middleton.

Page 11 Photo Captions (left to right, top to bottom):

Al-Hallabat. By Harry Marinakis.

Yarmouk-Decapolis tunnels. By John Brush.

Roman ruins in Amman. By Harry Marinakis.

Group photo in Amman. By John Brush.

Ahmad making coffee. By Stephan Kempe.

Al-Turah spring. By Harry Marinakis.

Presentations. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Freezing rain. By Harry Marinakis.

Presentations. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Yarmouk-Decapolis aqueduct tunnels. By John Brush.

Presentations. By Nader Atieh Alabed.

Aqueduct tunnels. By Greg Middleton.

Al-Hallabat. By Marjorie Coggan.

Nations represented at the symposium:  
Australia, Belgium, Germany, Iraq, Jordan, Netherlands, Switzerland, United States of America.



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2,000 year-old Yarmouk-Decapolis aqueduct tunnel



Photo: Greg Middleton



Photo: Harry Marinakis



## Post-Symposium Field Trip

The post-symposium field trip was held at the Badia Research & Development Center in As-Safawi, out in the "black desert" of the Harrat Al-Shaam volcanic field. Our host was Dr. Odeh M. Al Meshan, PhD, director of the Badia Research Program.



Dr. Odeh M. Al Meshan, PhD, (above, at Jawa) director of the Badia Research Program. The Badia center is shown on the left.

Jordan Badia Research and Development Program



الموقع بالعربية

<http://www.badia.gov.jo/>



The "black desert" of the Harrat Al-Shaam volcanic field

## The Post-Symposium Program Agenda

**March 19, 2012:** Qais volcanic flow. Caving in Assam Cave, Al Badia Cave. Tour of a quarry in a volcano. Presentations in the evening at the Badia Center.

**March 20, 2012:** Tour of the early bronze age city of Jawa. Caving in Al Fahda Cave. Presentations in the evening at the Badia Center.

**March 21, 2012:** Explored a desert "kite" on the Kempe volcano. Caving in Kempe Cave. Tour of the 7,000-year-old Roman outpost at Qasr Burqu (Castle Burqu).

**March 22, 2012:** Caving in Hashemite University Cave and Haleem Cave. Dinner in Al Mafraq. Return to Amman.



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Bronze-Age City of Jawa (~ 5,000 years old)



Dr. Odeh M. Al Meshan, PhD, at Jawa, on the Syrian border

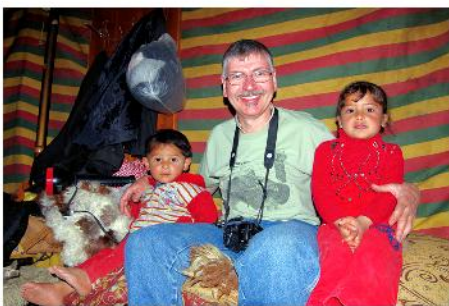
Julia James (left) and Marjorie Coggan at a gate in the wall at Jawa (Photo by John Brush)





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## Highlights from As-Safawi and the Post-Symposium Field Trip





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Al Badia Cave



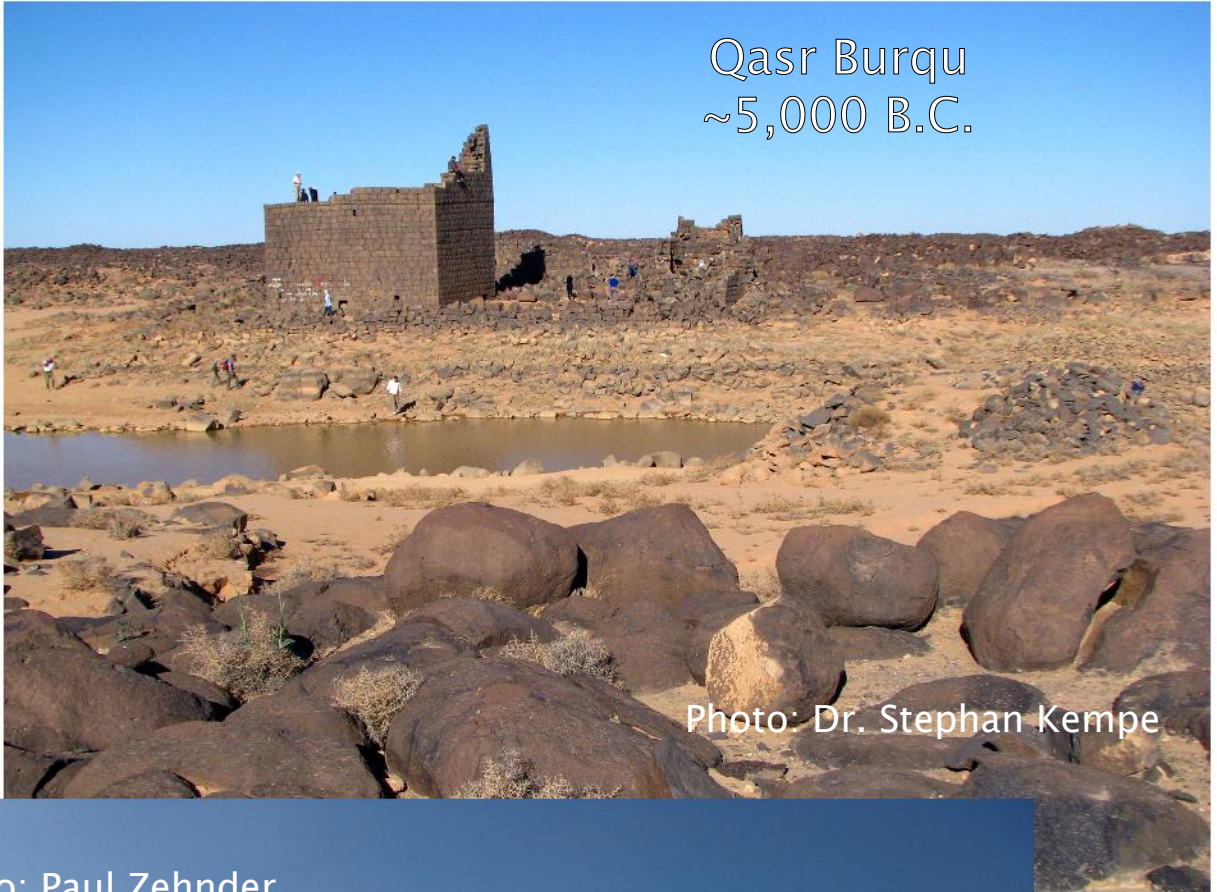
Photo: John Brush



Photo: John Brush & Marjorie Coggan



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Qasr Burqu  
~5,000 B.C.

Photo: Dr. Stephan Kempe

Photo: Paul Zehnder





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Al Fahda Cave



Photo: John Brush



Photo: John Brush



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Al Fahda Cave

Photo: Harry Marinakis



Photo: Harry Marinakis





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Photo: Marjorie Coggan

Kempe Volcano area  
& Desert Kites



Camel petroglyph





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Hashemite University Cave

Photo: Harry Marinakis



Splash Ring  
Photo: Greg Middleton

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undisclosed cave

Photos: John Brush & Marjorie Coggan





## Commission Business Meeting

by Harry Marinakis

Chairman Jan-Paul van der Pas called the Commission business meeting to order in Amman, Jordan, on March 17, 2012 at 8:15 p.m. with ten members present.

The Commission thanked Dr. Stephan Kempe and Dr. Ahmad Al-Malabeh for their hard work in organizing the symposium.

The recent deaths of Commission members Ron Greeley and Chris Wood were discussed, and condolence cards were signed for the families.

John brush volunteered to scan all of the back issues of the newsletter into digital format.

The organization and format of the electronic newsletter was discussed.

The Commission website is current hosted by Ken Ingham, maintained by John Pint and fees are paid by Jan Paul.

At the present time there is no financial support from the parent organization, the IUS.

Jan-Paul was nominated to be the treasurer. He will prepare a budget to send to the IUS to see if the Commission can obtain some funding for the website and other minimal expenses.

The 16th International Congress of Speleology was discussed. Dr. Kempe will contact the Congress organizers about getting a half-day session for the Commission on Volcanic Caves.

The question of the next symposium was discussed. There were only 3 proposed locations for the 17th ISV. All three proposed locations have major problems.

1. Galápagos Islands, Ecuador
2. El Malpais, New Mexico, U.S.A.
3. Hawai'i, U.S.A.

Commission members expressed an interest in a symposium in the Galápagos Islands but most were very concerned with the cost of travel. As such, this site was not high on the priority list.

Commission members also expressed interest in a symposium at El Malpais in New Mexico, but currently all of the caves there are closed due to White Nose Syndrome.



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Hawai'i appeared to be the best location for next symposium. However, the Commission does not have a strong presence in Hawai'i to organize a symposium there.

Thus the decision was made to determine the costs of a symposium in the Galápagos Islands, and to contact people in Hawai'i to see if anyone would be interested in hosting a symposium.

Finally, the Commission decided to prepare a written guide or checklist for symposium organizers to assist with the task of organizing a symposium.

## 17th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology Update

Since the Commission business meeting in Amman on March 17, 2012, there have been numerous developments regarding the next (17th) ISV.

New Mexico members of the National Speleological Society (NSS) who live near El Malpais are extremely interested in hosting a symposium when the caves are re-opened.

They are interested in hosting the 2017 NSS Convention in New Mexico, and would like the vulcanospeleology symposium to be hosted at the same time, much like the 15th ICS and the 2009 NSS Convention in Texas.

Hawaiian cavers do seem to have some interest in hosting a symposium there in 2016. The Hawaiian cavers also expressed interest in attending a symposium in the Galápagos Islands in 2014 .

Our Commission member in Ecuador, Dr. Theofilos Toulkeridis, is fully prepared to host a symposium in the Galápagos Islands in 2014 if the Commission so desires.



John Brush tangles with Haleem Cave

Photo: Greg Middleton

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**SPELEO CALENDAR**  
**2013**

**16th INTERNATIONAL  
CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY**



WHERE HISTORY MEETS FUTURE

July 21-28, 2013

<http://www.speleo2013.com>



Above: Paul Zehnder with one of our drivers

Below: Speeding across the Jordanian desert



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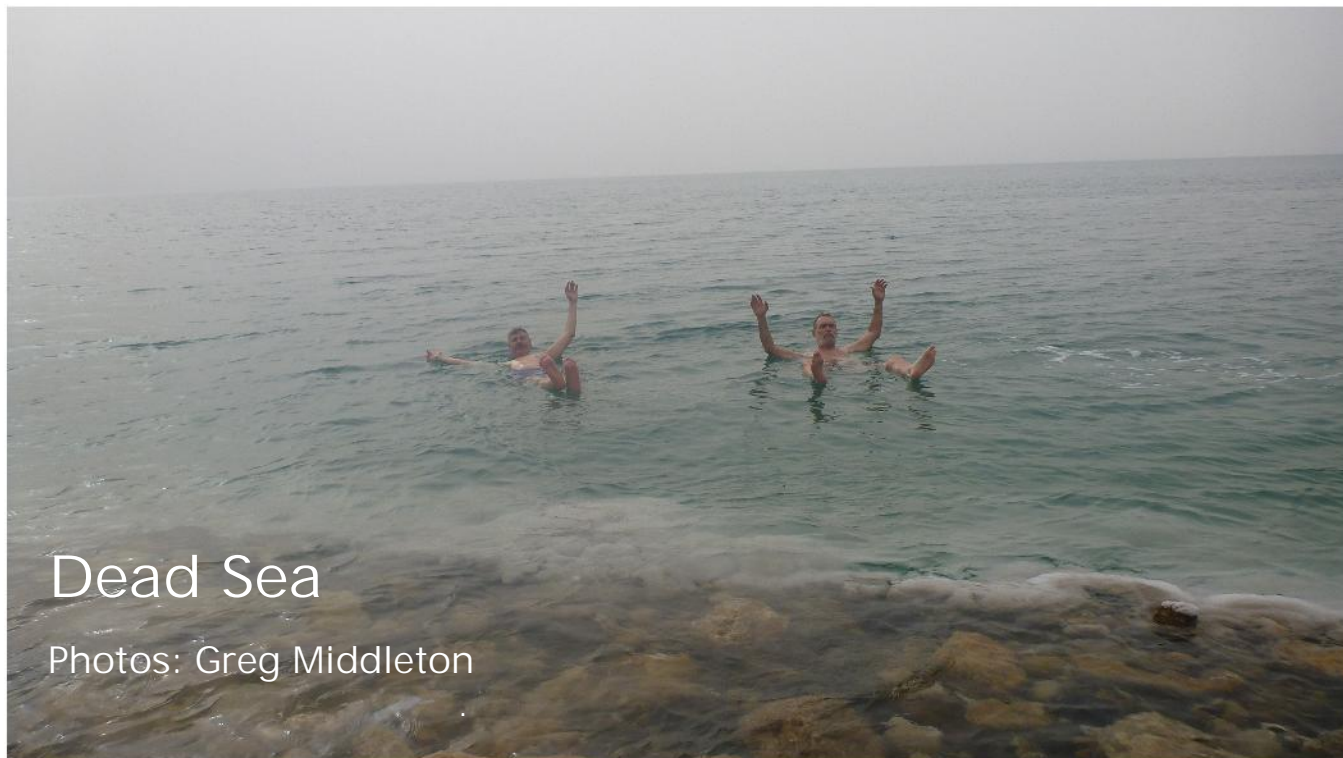
Petra

Photos: Greg Middleton



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1972 U.S.A.

1975 CATANIA

1982 U.S.A.

1983 CATANIA

1986 JAPAN

1991 U.S.A.

1994 CANARY IS.

1998 KENYA

1999 CATANIA

2002 ICELAND

2004 AZORES

2006 MEXICO

2008 KOREA

2010 AUSTRALIA

2012 JORDAN



# VULCANOSPELEOLOGY SYMPOSIA

